

### REMARKS

Claims 7; 14; and 15 have been amended. Claims 8 to 13 and 16 have been canceled. Claims 1 to 6 were previously canceled.

Claims 7; 14; and 15 remain in the application. Among these, claim 7 is the sole independent system claim.

Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested in light of these amendments and the following remarks.

As amended, claim 7 defines an endovascular prosthesis system. The system comprises a prosthesis body sized and configured for introduction into a blood vessel lumen and including a wall defining an interior passage for blood. The system further includes means for radially expanding the wall of the prosthetic body into contact with the blood vessel lumen. The system also includes a plurality of connectors attached to the wall in a circumferentially spaced distribution, and a tissue piercing spiral suture carried by each of the connectors. Each tissue piercing spiral suture includes a sharpened penetrating end that pierces tissue in response to rotation of the tissue piercing spiral suture. As further defined in amended claim 7, the system includes a plurality of semi-flexible cables. Each semi-flexible cable includes a distal end releasably connected to one of the tissue piercing spiral sutures carried by one of the connectors and a proximal end that extends to a remote location outside the blood vessel lumen. The system also includes an external rotary driver sized and configured to be coupled to the proximal end of each semi-flexible cable to rotate the semi-flexible cable and thereby rotate the tissue piercing spiral suture carried by the respective connector to pierce tissue and advance through the connector into tissue in the blood vessel lumen. As further defined in amended claim 7, each connector further includes a base comprising a tissue penetration stop for the tissue piercing spiral suture.

Claims 7 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) based upon Buchanan (US 6,074,418). Buchanan does not teach or suggest a system comprising a prosthesis body sized and configured for introduction into a blood vessel lumen and including a wall defining an interior passage for blood, and means for radially expanding the wall of the prosthetic body into contact with the blood vessel lumen. In Buchanan, the outer orifice ring 14 is preformed, and Buchanan does not include means for radially expanding the ring 14. Furthermore, in Buchanan, the locking mechanism 40 does not include a connector having a base that comprises a tissue penetration stop

for a tissue piercing spiral suture.

Claims 7 to 15 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) or 35 U.S.C. § 103 based upon Tanner (US 5,967,940). Tanner does not teach or suggest the use of tissue piercing spiral sutures including a sharpened penetrating end that pierces tissue in response to rotation of the tissue piercing spiral suture. Tanner first forms a hole in a tissue wall, and then inserts his fasteners through the formed hole. Tanner teaches away from the use of tissue piercing spiral sutures.

Applicant believes the case is in condition for allowance.

Allowance of claims 7; 14; and 15 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

By

Daniel R. Ryan

Registration No. 29,243

RYAN KROMHOLZ & MANION, S.C.

Post Office Box 26618

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226

(262) 783 - 1300